LINCOLN AND THE NEW YORK HERALD

[Stewart, Judd]

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LINCOLN

AND THE

NEW YORK HERALD

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

FROM THE COLLECTION OF

JUDD STEWART

Privately Printed

PLAINFIELD, NEW JERSEY

1907

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The letters reprinted herein are from the Gettysburg Edition *of* THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN *and are reproduced through the courtesy of the Francis D. Tandy Company. The letters given in facsimile, which perhaps complete all that Lincoln ever wrote upon this incident, have never heretofore been published. They were written to George G. Fogg, who was Secretary of the first Republican National Convention.*

In order that this incident in the Great Martyr's career may be presented in as interesting a form as possible, the Ambrotype of Lincoln

taken August 13th, 1860 (three days before his letter for the New York Herald) *now in the collection of Major William H. Lambert of Philadelphia, is used as a frontispiece.*

These letters of Lincoln telling of his boyhood, of his parents — his father in particular — and showing his great forbearance under a false imputation, seem to justify the publication of them as a separate addition to the great number of volumes on his life and work.

JUDD STEWART.

Plainfield, Nov. 7, 1907.

Letters to Samuel Haycraft

(Private)

Springfield, Illinois,
May 28, 1860.

Dear Sir:

Your recent letter, without date, is received. Also the copy of your speech on the contemplated Daniel Boone Monument, which I have not yet had time to read. In the main you are right about my history. My father was Thomas Lincoln, and Mrs. Sally Johnston was his second wife. You are mistaken about my mother. Her maiden name was Nancy Hanks. I was not born at Elizabethtown, but my mother's

first child, a daughter, two years older than myself, and now long since deceased, was. I was born February 12, 1809, near where Hogginsville (Hodgensville) now is, then in Hardin County. I do not think I ever saw you, though I very well know who you are—so well that I recognized your handwriting, on opening your letter, before I saw the signature. My recollection is that Ben Helm was first clerk, that you succeeded him, that Jack Thomas and William Farleigh graduated in the same office, and that your handwritings were all very similar. Am I right?

My father has been dead near ten years; but my step-mother, (Mrs. Johnston,) is still living.

I am really very glad of your letter, and shall be pleased to receive another at any time.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

(Private)

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS,
June 4, 1860.

DEAR SIR:

Your second letter, dated May 31st, is received. You suggest that a visit to the place of my nativity might be pleasant to me. Indeed it would. But would it be safe? Would not the people lynch me?

The place on Knob Creek, mentioned by Mr. Read, I remember very well; but I was not born there.

As my parents have told me, I was born on Nolin, very much nearer Hodgen's Mill than the Knob Creek place is. My earliest recollection, however, is of the Knob Creek place. Like you, I belonged to the Whig party from its origin to its close. I never belonged to the American party organization; nor ever to a party called a Union party, though I hope I neither am, nor ever have been, less devoted to the Union than yourself or any other patriotic man.

It may not be altogether without interest to let you know that my wife is a daughter of the late Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Ky., and that a half-sister of hers is the wife of Ben Hardin Helm, born and

raised at your town, but residing at Louisville now, as I believe.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS,
August 16, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:

A correspondent of the *New York Herald*, who was here a week ago, writing to that paper, represents me as saying I had been invited to visit Kentucky, but that I suspected it was a trap to inveigle me into Kentucky in order to do violence to me. This is wholly a mistake. I said no such thing. I do not remember, but possibly I did mention my correspondence with

you. But very certainly I was not guilty of stating, or insinuating, a suspicion of any intended violence, deception or other wrong, against me, by you or any other Kentuckian. Thinking the *Herald* correspondence might fall under your eye, I think it due to myself to enter my protest against the correctness of this part of it. I scarcely think the correspondent was malicious, but rather that he misunderstood what was said.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS,
August 23, 1860.

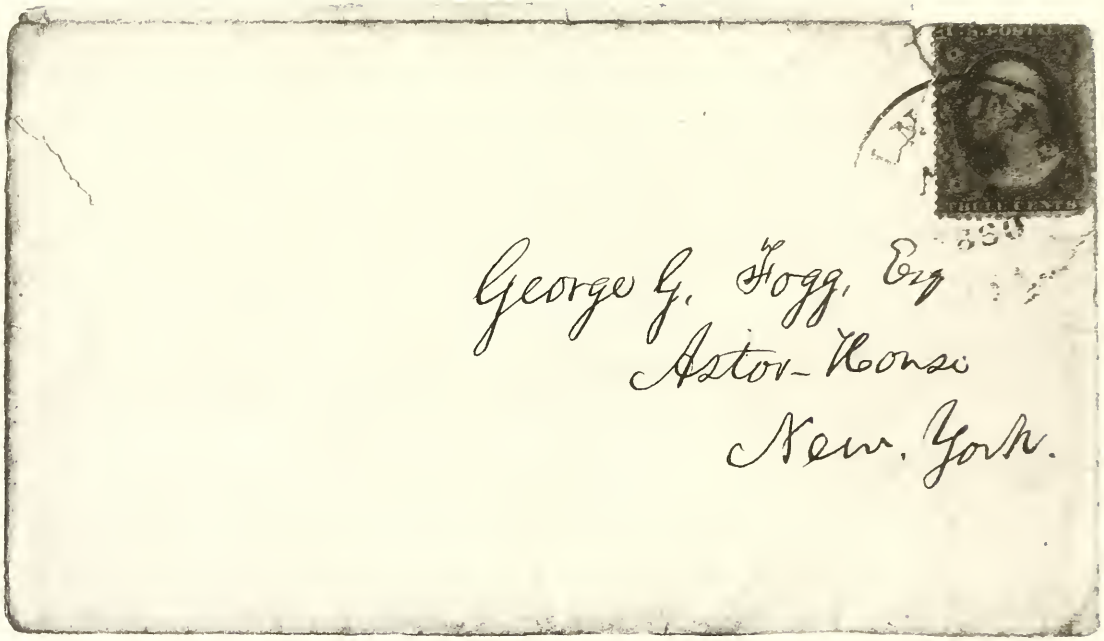
MY DEAR SIR:

Yours of the 19th just received. I now fear I may have given you

some uneasiness by my last letter. I did not mean to intimate that I had, to any extent, been involved or embarrassed by you; nor yet to draw from you anything to relieve myself from difficulty. My only object was to assure you that I had not, as represented by the *Herald* correspondent, charged you with an attempt to inveigle me into Kentucky to do me violence. I believe no such thing of you or of Kentuckians generally; and I dislike to be represented to them as slandering them in that way.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.


George G. Fogg, Esq
Astor-House
New. York.

Private

Springfield, Ills. Aug. 16. 1860

Hon. George G. Fogg.

My dear Sir:

I am annoyed some by the printed paragraph below, in relation to myself, taken from the N. Y. Herald's correspondence from this place of August 8th

> He had, he said, on one occasion been invited to go into Kentucky and revisit some of the scenes with whose history his father in his lifetime had been identified. On asking by letter whether Judge Lynch would be present, he received no response; and he therefore came to the conclusion that the invitation was a trap laid by some designing person to inveigle him into a slave State for the purpose of doing violence to his person.

This is decidedly wrong. I did not say it— I do not impugn the correspondent— I suppose he misconceived the statement from the following incident— Soon after the Chicago nomination I was written to by a highly respectable gentleman of Hardin County, Ky. inquiring if I was a son of Thomas Lincoln, whom he had known long ago, in

on that county— I answered that I was, and that I was myself born— then— He wrote again, and, among other things, (did not invite me) but simply inquired if it would not be agreeable to me to revisit the scenes of my childhood— I replied, among other things, "It would indeed; but would you not Lynch me?". He did not write again—

I have, playfully, (and many other times) related this incident several times; and I suppose I did so to the Herald correspondent, though I do not remember it— If I did, it is all that I did say from which the correspondent could have inferred his statement—

Now, I dislike, exceedingly, for Kentuckians to understand that I am charging them with a purpose to inveigle me, and do violence to me— Yet I can not go into the

newspapers— Would not the editor of the Herald, upon being shown the letter, insert the short correction, which you [illegible] upon the inclosed slips?.

Please try them, unless you perceive some sufficient reason to the contrary— In no event, let my name be publicly seen.

Yours very truly
A. Lincoln

Connection

We have such assurance as satisfies us that our correspondent writing from Springfield, Ills, under date of Aug. 8- was mistaken in representing Mr Lincoln as expressing a suspicion of a design to inveigle him into Kentucky for the purpose of doing him violence- Mr Lincoln neither entertains, nor has intended to express any such suspicion-

Springfield, Ills. Aug. 29. 1860

Hon. George G. Fogg.

My dear Sir

Yours of the 23rd was only received yesterday evening—

You have done precisely right in that matter with the Herald— Do nothing further about it— Although it wrongs me, and annoys me some, I prefer letting it run its course, to getting into the papers over my own name— I regret the trouble it has given you, and thank you also for having performed your part so cheerfully and correctly—

What you say of the Empire state is of a piece with all the news I receive from there— The whole field appears reasonably well.

Yours very truly

A. Lincoln

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